Chapter 89: Guilt

I NEED YOUR HELP TO DEFEAT THE HERO OF THE SOUTH.
TELL ME, SCHLACHT.
DO I LOOK LIKE SOMEONE WHO WOULD RISK HIS LIFE FOR THE DEMON KING?
DON'T DRAG ME ANY FURTHER INTO THIS STUPID, MADE-UP WAR.
I COULDN'T CARE LESS WHAT HAPPENS TO THE DEMON KING'S ARMY.
YES, YOU'VE ALWAYS DESPISED ANY KIND OF CONFLICT.
HOWEVER, THIS IS A DIRECT ORDER FROM THE DEMON KING.
I'LL HAVE TO KILL YOU IF YOU DISOBEY.
FEAR IS THE ONLY WAY TO GOVERN CREATURES AS INDIVIDUALISTIC AS DEMONS.
I'M SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT TOO.
YOU'D MAKE AN EXAMPLE OUT OF ME, HUH?
DO YOU BELIEVE YOU CAN?
YOU THINK I CAN'T?
I WOULD IMAGINE SO.
STILL, I WOULD RATHER NOT.
THAT YOU'VE HAD SOME VISIONS AND HAVE COME ALL THIS WAY TO SEE ME MUST MEAN...
...THAT I AM CRUCIAL TO THIS PLAN.
I CANNOT DEFY THAT.
GRAUSAM THE MIRACULOUS, ONE OF THE SEVEN SAGES OF DESTRUCTION.
I'M AT A TERRIBLE DISADVANTAGE AGAINST HIM.
YOU'RE VERY PERCEPTIVE.
AND YOU'RE VERY UNSETTLING.
YOU'VE ALWAYS MADE ME DANCE LIKE A PUPPET ON A STRING.
SO, SCHLACHT...
HOW DO YOU WANT ME TO DANCE THIS TIME?
ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS FIGHT.
NO NEED FOR ANY STRATEGY.
YOUR MENACING PRESENCE ALONE WILL BE ENOUGH TROUBLE FOR THE HERO OF THE SOUTH.
THAT'S ALL?
MACHT...
I'VE FOUGHT THE HERO OF THE SOUTH COUNTLESS TIMES IN MY VISIONS OF THE FUTURE.
AND THE CONCLUSION I'VE COME TO...
...IS THAT IT WON'T BE A PROBLEM.
SO IT'S A DRAW, HUH?
YOU LOOK LIKE SOMEONE WHO IS READY TO DIE.
I WON'T KNOW UNLESS I TRY.
ALSO, WE'VE MADE AN ARRANGEMENT FOR GRAUSAM TO ERASE YOUR MEMORIES AFTER THE MISSION.
WHY?
ONE DAY, YOU...
...WILL SLIP UP, AND SHE WILL READ YOUR MEMORIES.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO MAKE SUCH A MISTAKE...
...MACHT.
UNFORTUNATELY, FRIEREN...
...I CAN'T AFFORD TO LET YOU SEE OUR FIGHT AGAINST THE HERO OF THE SOUTH.
WE ARE IN A WAR FOR OUR VERY EXISTENCE AS DEMONS.
WE'LL BE FIGHTING FOR DEMONS IN A MOPPING-UP OPERATION...
...A THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW.
"FRIEREN"?
A STORY FOR THE FUTURE.
THEN I'LL SEE YOU ON THE BATTLEFIELD.
I HOPE YOU SURVIVE THIS, SCHLACHT.
I'VE HEARD YOU SAY SUCH WORDS OF CONCERN...
...COUNTLESS TIMES IN MY VISIONS.
KSHH
NOW, FIGHT TO THE DEATH.
I WILL ALLOW THE SURVIVOR TO LIVE.
I'VE KILLED SO MANY IN THE YEARS SINCE THEN.
I DIDN'T DO IT TO FEED ON THEM...
...NOR WAS I DRIVEN BY INSTINCT.
THE SLAUGHTER WAS POINTLESS.
AND YET I FELT NOTHING.
TO THIS DAY, I HAVE YET TO DISCOVER WHAT MALICE OR GUILT REALLY ARE.
WHY ARE YOU CRYING?
YOU SURVIVED. AREN'T YOU GLAD?
SHE... ...DIDN'T RESIST AT ALL...
NO, SHE DIDN'T.
SO, WHAT ARE YOU CRYING ABOUT?
SHE WAS MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND...
WE WERE ALWAYS TOGETHER...
...BUT I JUST KILLED HER...
I...
WHY DID YOU PRETEND LIKE YOU WERE GOING TO STAB ME?
I SHOULD HAVE DIED INSTEAD...
EXCELLENT.
YOU'RE EXPERIENCING AN EMOTION THAT I CANNOT COMPREHEND.
IS IT MALICE?
OR GUILT?
I SEE. GUILT THEN.
DESCRIBE IT WITH WORDS.
TEACH ME THAT EMOTION.
YOU MONSTER!
THUK
I FINALLY GOT CLOSER TO AN ANSWER.
I THANK YOU, BOY.
I DON'T EVEN KNOW YOUR NAME.
RIGHT. I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT YOU PEOPLE.
NOTHING AT ALL.
IT MAKES SENSE THAT I'VE NEVER FELT ANYTHING, NO MATTER HOW MANY OF YOU DIE.
PERHAPS I'LL UNDERSTAND THAT EMOTION IF I KILL SOMEONE CLOSER TO ME.
I'LL NEED A HUMAN ACQUAINTANCE FOR THAT.
SOMEONE I'VE SPENT ENOUGH TIME WITH THAT I CAN CALL THEM A CLOSE FRIEND.
LUCKILY, I HAVE ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD.
SO THAT'S THE FORTRESS CITY OF WEISE.
THE LARGEST HUMAN SETTLEMENT IN THE NORTHERN PLATEAU.

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